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9 UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
10 CENTRAL DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA

11 **JOSHUA ASSIFF,**

12 **Plaintiff,**

13 **v.**

14 **COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES;**
15 **SHERIFF DEPUTY BADGE**
16 **NUMBER 404532;**
17 **And DOES 1 through 10,**

18 **Defendants.**

Case No. 2:22-cv-05367 RGK (MAAx)

**MEMORANDUM OF POINTS AND
AUTHORITIES IN OPPOSITION TO
MOTION TO DISMISS**

Date: January 30, 2022

Time: 9:00 a.m.

Dept: 850

Action Filed: August 3, 2022

Pretrial Conference: July 10, 2023

Trial Date: July 25, 2023

Assigned to: Hon. R. Gary Klausner,
District Judge, Courtroom 850

All Discovery Matters Referred to: Hon.
Maria A. Audero, District Judge

23 Plaintiff **JOSHUA ASSIFF** (hereinafter referred to as “ASSIFF” or
24 “Plaintiff”) hereby respectfully submits the following memorandum of points and
25 authorities in opposition to the motion to dismiss under FRCP 12(b)(6) filed in this
26 action by Defendants COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES (“COLA”) and SERGEANT
27 TRAVIS KELLY (“KELLY”) (hereinafter COLA and KELLY shall collectively be
28 referred to as “Defendants”).

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1 **MEMORANDUM OF POINTS AND AUTHORITIES**

2 Plaintiff JOSHUA ASSIFF (hereinafter referred to as “ASSIFF” or “Plaintiff”)
3 hereby respectfully submits the following memorandum of points and authorities in
4 opposition to the motion to dismiss under FRCP 12(b)(6) filed in this action by
5 Defendants COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES (“COLA”) and SERGEANT TRAVIS
6 KELLY (“KELLY”) (hereinafter COLA and KELLY shall collectively be referred
7 to as “Defendants”).

8 **I. INTRODUCTION**

9 Plaintiff is a 21-year old black male and a student at Antelope Valley College
10 where he plays basketball. Plaintiff was driving from his home to a teammate’s house
11 in order to carpool to basketball practice. For no apparent reason and without
12 probable cause, KELLY, a male Caucasian motorcycle Sheriff deputy, pulled
13 Plaintiff over. For no apparent reason and without probable cause, KELLY – as well
14 as other deputies who subsequently responded to the call – all tasered, choked, pepper
15 sprayed, beat and arrested Plaintiff. Plaintiff has asserted two causes of action – the
16 First Cause of Action against KELLY for violation of 42 USC § 1983 (arrest without
17 probable cause and with excessive force), and the Second Cause of Action against
18 COLA for violation of 42 USC § 1983 (*Monell* liability).

19 Defendant’s prior motion to dismiss, brought on substantially the same
20 arguments as offered on this motion, was granted in part *with leave to amend*. On
21 the 1983 cause of action against KELLY, the Court **granted** the motion as to
22 *unlawful arrest*, finding the allegations contained legal conclusions as opposed to
23 factual allegations (citing *Twombly*). The Court **denied** the motion as to *excessive*
24 *force*, finding the allegations sufficient to state a cause of action. The Court **granted**
25 the motion as to the *Monell* claim against COLA, again finding the allegations too
26 conclusory under *Twombly* and finding the single incident alleged in the complaint
27 insufficient to allege a custom and practice (citing *Davis v. Ellensburg*).
28

1 Plaintiff filed an amended complaint specifically addressing the deficiencies
2 found by the Court.

3 The amended complaint alleges detailed factual allegations of the events
4 leading up to the unlawful arrest. Plaintiff did not commit a traffic infraction. (FAC
5 4:6-8) Nevertheless, KELLY pulled Plaintiff over for purportedly committing a
6 minor traffic infraction. (FAC 4:12-13) Plaintiff was polite throughout the encounter
7 and always referred to KELLY as “officer” or “sir.” (FAC 4:13-14) Even though the
8 traffic stop only involved a minor traffic infraction, KELLY irrationally and angrily
9 threatened to arrest Plaintiff a mere 40 seconds into the encounter, (FAC 4:16-16)
10 and KELLY actually used force to effectuate the arrest of Plaintiff a mere 5 seconds
11 after that. (FAC 4:16-18) Nothing in the allegations can justify KELLY’s
12 inexplicable behavior and nothing justifies Plaintiff’s arrest.

13 In support of the *Monell* claim against COLA, Plaintiff’s amended complaint
14 added allegations that the U.S. Department of Justice performed an extensive study
15 of traffic stops in the Antelope Valley by the Los Angeles Sheriff’s Department in
16 2013 and “found that LASD’s Antelope Valley stations have engaged in a pattern or
17 practice of discriminatory and otherwise unlawful searches and seizures, including
18 the use of unreasonable force, in violation of the Fourth Amendment, the Fourteenth
19 Amendment, and Title VI.” (FAC 6:25-7:1) These finding led to a settlement
20 agreement between the US DOJ and COLA in 2015 requiring significant reform and
21 continued oversight. (FAC 7:3-5) However, the recent oversight reports establish
22 that the Sheriff’s Department in Antelope Valley still has a pattern and practice of
23 racial profiling and discriminatory traffic stops against African Americans like
24 Plaintiff. (FAC 7:7-17) Plaintiff even attached the 2013 report of the DOJ Civil
25 Rights Division finding the discriminatory practices (Exhibit 1) and the 2020
26 oversight report finding the racial profiling and discriminatory traffic stops persist.
27 (Exhibit 2)

1 Defendants argue that the facts as alleged do not show that Plaintiff's arrest
2 was unlawful. However, Defendants' motion to dismiss (at 7:2-6) grossly
3 mischaracterize the allegations in an attempt to justify KELLY's unlawful arrest.
4 Defendants claim Plaintiff "verbally argued" with KELLY and refused to provide his
5 driver's license. Those facts were not alleged. Rather, Plaintiff was always polite
6 and referred to KELLY as "officer" or "sir," (FAC 4:11-14) and there is no allegation
7 that Plaintiff ever refused to provide his license. Finally, the short amount of time (a
8 matter of only seconds) between KELLY's demand for Plaintiff's license and
9 KELLY's use of force to effectuate the arrest puts the lie to any assertion that
10 KELLY's arrest of Plaintiff was justifiable.

11 Defendants, again, argue that the issue of probable cause has been conclusively
12 determined, and Plaintiff is precluded by collateral estoppel from disputing a finding
13 purportedly made on an ex parte booking form entitled Probable Cause
14 Determination (Declaration) and apparently e-signed by a California Superior Court
15 Judge. The fact that Defendants would even forward such an argument (not once,
16 but twice) is worrisome. The "determination" was made only 24 hours after the arrest,
17 before Plaintiff obtained counsel, while Plaintiff was not present, without an
18 opportunity by Plaintiff or Plaintiff's counsel to be heard, and based solely on a six-
19 line declaration e-signed by KELLY. This was not a final judgment on the merits or
20 even a probable cause finding after a preliminary hearing. This issue was not litigated,
21 Plaintiff was not a party with an opportunity to be heard, and this was not a final
22 determination on the merits. Collateral estoppel simply does not apply.

23 Defendants, again, argue that the *Monell* claim against COLA fails, because
24 the allegations are conclusory and unsupported by facts. However, this time the
25 argument is being made in the face of a mountain of evidence and statistics of a
26 pattern or practice of Constitutional violations provided by the Plaintiff via the U.S.
27 Department of Justice and COLA's own compliance monitors. The specific factual
28 allegations show that in 2013, the US DOJ found "reasonable cause to believe that

1 LASD Antelope Valley deputies engage in a pattern or practice of misconduct in
2 violation of the Constitution and federal law in a number of ways, including: •
3 Pedestrian and vehicle stops that violate the Fourth Amendment; • Stops that appear
4 motivated by racial bias, in violation of the Fourteenth Amendment and federal
5 statutory law; • The use of unreasonable force in violation of the Fourth
6 Amendment...” (Exhibit 1, p. 22) These finding by the US DOJ perfectly track the
7 allegations in this case – a traffic stop without probable cause, a racially motivated
8 traffic stop, and the use of unreasonable force.

9 Plaintiff made a good faith effort to address the deficiencies identified by the
10 Court in its prior ruling. In the event that the Court finds any deficiencies, Plaintiff
11 contends that the deficiencies can be corrected by amendment and respectfully
12 requests an opportunity to do so.

13 **II. STANDARD OF RULING ON MOTION TO DISMISS**

14 A motion pursuant to Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 12(b)(6) tests the legal
15 sufficiency of the claims asserted in a complaint. Under this Rule, a district court
16 properly dismisses a claim if “there is a ‘lack of a cognizable legal theory or the
17 absence of sufficient facts alleged under a cognizable legal theory.’” *Conservation*
18 *Force v. Salazar*, 646 F.3d 1240, 1242 (9th Cir. 2011) (quoting *Balisteri v. Pacifica*
19 *Police Dep’t*, 901 F.2d 696, 699 (9th Cir. 1988)). “While a complaint attacked by a
20 Rule 12(b)(6) motion to dismiss does not need detailed factual allegations, a
21 plaintiff’s obligation to provide the ‘grounds’ of his ‘entitlement to relief’ requires
22 more than labels and conclusions, and a formulaic recitation of the elements of a
23 cause of action will not do.” *Bell Atlantic Corp. v. Twombly*, 550 U.S. 544, 555 (2007)
24 (internal citations omitted). “Factual allegations must be enough to raise a right to
25 relief above the speculative level.” *Id.* (internal citations omitted).

26 In considering a motion pursuant to Rule 12(b)(6), a court must accept as true
27 all material allegations in the complaint, as well as all reasonable inferences to be
28 drawn from them. *Pareto v. FDIC*, 139 F.3d 696, 699 (9th Cir. 1998). The complaint

1 must be read in the light most favorable to the nonmoving party. *Sprewell v. Golden*
2 *State Warriors*, 266 F.3d 979, 988 (9th Cir. 2001). However, “a court considering a
3 motion to dismiss can choose to begin by identifying pleadings that, because they are
4 no more than conclusions, are not entitled to the assumption of truth. While legal
5 conclusions can provide the framework of a complaint, they must be supported by
6 factual allegations.” *Ashcroft v. Iqbal*, 556 U.S. 662, 679 (2009); see *Moss v. United*
7 *States Secret Service*, 572 F.3d 962, 969 (9th Cir. 2009) (“[F]or a complaint to
8 survive a motion to dismiss, the non-conclusory ‘factual content,’ and reasonable
9 inferences from that content, must be plausibly suggestive of a claim entitling the
10 plaintiff to relief.”). Ultimately, “[d]etermining whether a complaint states a plausible
11 claim for relief will . . . be a context-specific task that requires the reviewing court to
12 draw on its judicial experience and common sense.” *Iqbal*, 556 U.S. at 679.

13 Unless a court converts a Rule 12(b)(6) motion into a motion for summary
14 judgment, a court cannot consider material outside of the complaint (e.g., facts
15 presented in briefs, affidavits, or discovery materials). *In re American Cont’l*
16 *Corp./Lincoln Sav. & Loan Sec. Litig.*, 102 F.3d 1524, 1537 (9th Cir. 1996), rev’d on
17 other grounds sub nom *Lexecon, Inc. v. Milberg Weiss Bershad Hynes & Lerach*, 523
18 U.S. 26 (1998). A court may, however, consider exhibits submitted with or alleged
19 in the complaint and matters that may be judicially noticed pursuant to Federal Rule
20 of Evidence 201. *In re Silicon Graphics Inc. Sec. Litig.*, 183 F.3d 970, 986 (9th Cir.
21 1999); *Lee v. City of Los Angeles*, 250 F.3d 668, 689 (9th Cir. 2001).

22 **III. PLAINTIFF ADEQUATELY ALLEGED UNLAWFUL ARREST**

23 **A. Plaintiff Was Arrested Without Probable Cause**

24 Defendants argue that the facts as alleged in the Complaint show that KELLY
25 had probable cause to arrest Plaintiff under Penal Code section 69 for obstructing or
26 resisting an officer and Penal Code section 243(b) battery against an officer.
27 However, in ruling on this motion, the facts are not what Defendants hope to be able
28

1 to argue at trial, but rather as set forth in the amended complaint. Those allegations
2 are as follows:

3 **Plaintiff was obeying all traffic laws, rules and regulations. At**
4 **the intersection of Soledad Canyon Road and Sierra Highway,**
5 **Plaintiff made a legal right hand turn on a green light. (FAC 4:6-**
6 **8)**

7 **The encounter was captured on the DEPUTY's body worn**
8 **camera. DEPUTY falsely accused Plaintiff of making an illegal**
9 **right hand turn on a red light. Plaintiff politely protested his**
10 **innocence, referring to the DEPUTY throughout the encounter**
11 **as either "sir" or "officer." Merely 40 seconds into the**
12 **encounter, DEPUTY angrily shouted at Plaintiff, "Gimme your**
13 **driver's license or you're going to jail!" Merely 5 seconds after**
14 **this demand, DEPUTY threw open Plaintiff's car door and laid**
15 **hands upon Plaintiff in an effort to forcibly remove Plaintiff**
16 **from the car. Plaintiff requested to speak with the DEPUTY's**
17 **supervisor. DEPUTY immediately responded to Plaintiff's**
18 **request by shouting, "I AM A SUPERVISOR!" and pepper**
19 **spraying Plaintiff in the face. For no apparent reason and without**
20 **probable cause, DEPUTY – as well as other deputies apparently**
21 **acting under color of law and apparently working for the**
22 **Department and COLA who subsequently responded to the call – all**
23 **tasered, choked, pepper sprayed, beat and arrested Plaintiff. (FAC**
24 **4:11-24)**

25 Defendants mischaracterize these allegations to suit their argument. However,
26 the allegations are clear. KELLEY pulled Plaintiff over for a mere traffic infraction,
27 a traffic infraction that Plaintiff did not even commit. So, there was not even probable
28 cause for the traffic stop, which was just another racially motivated traffic stop in
Antelope Valley. Plaintiff was polite to KELLY and referred to him as "sir" or
"officer." There is no allegation that Plaintiff refused to produce his driver's license.
There is no allegation that Plaintiff obstructed or battered KELLY. Rather, KELLY
inexplicably started using force against Plaintiff to effectuate Plaintiff's arrest for no
apparent reason and without probable cause *in a matter of seconds into a traffic stop*

1 *for a minor traffic infraction.* Based upon these allegations, Plaintiff has adequately
2 alleged unlawful arrest.

3 **B. There Is No Collateral Estoppel On The Issue Of Probable Cause**

4 Defendants renew their argument that the issue of probable cause has been
5 conclusively determined, and Plaintiff is precluded by Collateral Estoppel from
6 disputing a finding purportedly made on an ex parte booking form entitled Probable
7 Cause Determination (Declaration) and apparently e-signed by California Superior
8 Court Judge Christopher Estes approximately 24 hours after the arrest. “Under
9 collateral estoppel, once a court has decided an issue of fact or law necessary to its
10 judgment, that decision may preclude re-litigation of the issue in a suit on a different
11 cause of action involving a party to the first case.” *Dodd v. Hood River County*, 59
12 F.3d 852, 863 (9th Cir.1995). Under both California and federal law, collateral
13 estoppel applies only where it is established that (1) the issue necessarily decided at
14 the previous proceeding is identical to the one which is sought to be relitigated; (2)
15 the first proceeding ended with a final judgment on the merits; and (3) the party
16 against whom collateral estoppel is asserted was a party or in privity with a party at
17 the first proceeding. [*Younan v. Caruso*, 51 Cal.App.4th 401, 406-07, 59 Cal.Rptr.2d
18 103 (1996); see also *Trevino v. Gates*, 99 F.3d 911, 923 (9th Cir. 1996) – “(1) the
19 issue at stake must be identical to the one alleged in the prior litigation; (2) the issue
20 must have been actually litigated [by the party against whom preclusion is asserted]
21 in the prior litigation; and (3) the determination of the issue in the prior litigation
22 must have been a critical and necessary part of the judgment in the earlier action.” *Id.*
23 citing *Town of North Bonneville v. Callaway*, 10 F.3d 1505, 1508 (9th Cir.1993)]
24 “The party asserting preclusion bears the burden of showing with clarity and certainty
25 what was determined by the prior judgment.” *Offshore Sportswear, Inc. v. Vuarnet*
26 *International, B.V.*, 114 F.3d 848, 850 (9th Cir.1997).

27 The Defendants’ claim of collateral estoppel, based upon a one-paged ex parte
28 e-signed booking form, must be rejected for a host of reasons. First, there is no

1 showing that the issue was ever litigated in the first proceeding. Plaintiff was not
2 present. Plaintiff was not represented. Plaintiff was not given any opportunity to be
3 heard. Only KELLY's short one-sided declaration was even considered. Thus, the
4 issue was never litigated, and Plaintiff cannot fairly be considered to be a party to the
5 first "proceeding." Second, the first "proceeding" did not end with a final judgment
6 on the merits. Under these circumstances, a *final* determination would be after a trial
7 on the merits and a conviction of Plaintiff on the crimes alleged. However, that did
8 not happen here. There was no trial on the merits. Plaintiff was never convicted of
9 anything. *There was not even a preliminary hearing where Plaintiff might have had*
10 *an opportunity to be heard.* There was no preliminary hearing, because there were
11 no criminal proceedings. **This was a DA reject** – no charges were even brought by
12 the District Attorney. The DA took one look at the body camera footage and
13 presumably concluded, despite the violent arrest, there were no crimes committed by
14 Plaintiff. Since Plaintiff was not a party, the issue was not litigated, and there was
15 no final judgment on the merits, there is no issue preclusion on probable cause.

16 Defendants rely on *Evans v. Cnty. of Los Angeles*, 529 F. Supp. 3d 1082 (C.D.
17 Cal. 2021) for their argument. However, they selectively edited the quote from that
18 case to mislead this Court. They quote a "finding of probable cause ... is a final
19 judgment on the merits for the purposes of collateral estoppel under the California
20 law..." (Defendants' Motion, Doc. #16, 7;4-5) However, the actual quote is a
21 "finding of probable cause **to hold the defendant over for trial** is a final judgment
22 on the merits for the purposes of collateral estoppel under the California law..."
23 (*Evans v. Cnty. of Los Angeles*, *supra*, 529 F. Supp. 3d at 1095, emphasis added).
24 That omitted part of the quote, "to hold the defendant over for trial" is, of course, all
25 important. *Evans*, and that quote, concerned the very different situation where the
26 plaintiff had been criminally charged, the plaintiff was represented by counsel, the
27 court held a formal adversarial proceeding in the form of a preliminary hearing,
28 counsel for plaintiff was given an opportunity the cross-examine witnesses, present

1 evidence and make arguments, and after that fully litigated proceeding the Court held
2 there was probable cause to hold the plaintiff (the defendant in the criminal
3 proceeding) over for trial. None of that is present here, and Defendants know that.
4 That is why they deceptively edited the quote in the *Evans* case.

5 **IV. PLAINTIFF ADEQUATELY ALLEGED A “MONELL” CLAIM**

6 Defendants argue that Plaintiff’s *Monell* claim fails, not because the elements
7 of the claim are not satisfied by the pleading, but because the allegations are
8 conclusory and not supported by enough “facts” to support those conclusions. The
9 Court in its ruling on the initial motion to dismiss agreed, and citing *Davis v.*
10 *Ellensburg*, 869 F.2d 1230 (9th Cir. 1989) stated that Plaintiff needed to allege facts
11 showing this was more than an isolated incident but rather “it must be founded upon
12 practices of sufficient duration, frequency and consistency that the conduct has
13 become a traditional method of carrying out policy.” In the amended complaint,
14 Plaintiff did just that and alleges these facts:

15 The County knowingly and intentionally promulgated,
16 maintained, applied, enforced, and continued policies,
17 customs, practices and usages in violation of the Fourth and
18 Fourteenth Amendment respectively to the United States
19 Constitution, which policies, customs, practices, and
20 usages at all times herein mentioned caused Plaintiff’s
21 harm. These policies, customs, practices and usages
22 included, without limitation, the employment of
23 motorcycle and other officers to make unnecessary and
24 unwarranted traffic stops to bully and harass African
25 American drivers. This would include among other things,
26 the initiation of frivolous traffic stops, arrest without
27 probable cause, and the use of excessive force to effectuate
28 the arrest. **The Los Angeles County Sheriff’s
Department has a long and sordid history of racial
profiling and discriminatory traffic stops, particularly
in the Antelope Valley. For years, black and Latino
residents in the Antelope Valley complained they were
the victims of racially biased stops and searches along
with other mistreatment by Los Angeles County**

1 Sheriff's deputies. In 2013, the US Department of
2 Justice, Civil Rights Division analyzed Sheriff's
3 Department data from tens of thousands of vehicle and
4 pedestrian stops, interviewed hundreds of people and
5 reviewed volumes of internal sheriff's documents, and
6 after this thorough analysis the Department of Justice
7 "found that LASD's Antelope Valley stations have
8 engaged in a pattern or practice of discriminatory and
9 otherwise unlawful searches and seizures, including the
10 use of unreasonable force, in violation of the Fourth
11 Amendment, the Fourteenth Amendment, and Title VI.
12 We found also that deputies assigned to these stations
13 have engaged in a pattern or practice of discrimination
14 against African Americans in violation of the Fair
15 Housing Act." (See, Exhibit 1) The findings forced the
16 county to reach a legal settlement with federal
17 authorities in 2015 that called for significant reforms
18 and continued oversight. However, despite all of this,
19 the racial profiling and discriminatory traffic stops in
20 the Antelope Valley persist, as evidenced by continued
21 gross racial disparities. According to an NCCD report
22 from 2020 found on the Sheriff's Department's own
23 website entitled, "An Analysis of Racial/Ethnic
24 Disparities in Stops by Los Angeles County Sheriff's
25 Deputies in the Antelope Valley" the report found that
26 Black drivers make up 32% of all traffic stops even
27 though they account for only 17% of the population.
28 The report also found that black drivers once stopped
were more likely to have both their vehicle and their
persons searched, more likely to experience backseat
detentions, and more likely to be asked if they are on
probation or parole. All this is in spite of the fact that
black drivers have a much lower contraband discovery
rate (15.4%) than either their white or Hispanic
counterparts (24.4% and 22.3% respectfully). (See,
Exhibit 2) This problem with racial profiling and
discriminatory traffic stops in the Antelope Valley is
not an isolated single incident, but rather a persistent
and ongoing problem recognized by the US Department
of Justice, Civil Rights Division. (FAC 6:8-7:20)

1 In addition to these allegations, the amended complaint attaches the 2013 DOJ
2 report and the 2020 NCCD oversight report. For the purposes of this motion, all of
3 these alleged facts must be presumed true, as well as any and all reasonable
4 inferences to be drawn from those facts. [*Pareto v. FDIC*, 139 F.3d 696, 699 (9th
5 Cir. 1998)] These facts, once proven at trial, are sufficient to support Plaintiff's
6 *Monell* claim against COLA.

7 Defendants attempt to mislead the Court on the import of Exhibit 1 by claiming
8 that it only concerns violations of the Fair Housing Act and does not concern issues
9 involving excessive force or unlawful arrests for violations of Penal Code sections 69
10 and 243(b). (See, motion 11:4-10) However, even a cursory review of the Exhibits
11 shows nothing could be further from the truth. On page 22 of Exhibit 1 under the
12 section SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, the U.S. Department of Justice, Civil Rights
13 Division stated as follows: "Our investigation demonstrated reasonable cause to
14 believe that LASD Antelope Valley deputies engage in a pattern or practice of
15 misconduct in violation of the Constitution and federal law in a number of ways,
16 including: • Pedestrian and vehicle stops that violate the Fourth Amendment; • Stops
17 that appear motivated by racial bias, in violation of the Fourteenth Amendment and
18 federal statutory law; • The use of unreasonable force in violation of the Fourth
19 Amendment..." (Exhibit 1, p. 22)

20 As for unlawful arrests for violations of Penal Code sections 69 and 243(b),
21 the U.S. Department of Justice, Civil Rights Division found as follows:

22 We examined use of force reports from August 2010 to August
23 2011 in which the subject was charged only with the following and
24 no other crimes: resisting arrest or obstructing an officer in his or
25 her duties, whether a felony, California Penal Code (PC) § 69;
26 misdemeanor, PC § 148(a)(1); and battery on a peace officer or other
27 public officer without the infliction of injury, PC § 243(b)). Of all
28 the use of force reports reviewed, approximately 22% fit into this
category.

1 Perhaps most strikingly, we found that 81% of the uses of force
2 we reviewed where the only charge was obstruction-related
3 involved targets who were African American or Latino. For the 25
4 felony obstruction-only arrests, 88% involved victims who were
5 people of color. This is an extraordinarily disproportionate number
6 of obstruction charges involving use of force against people of color
7 and warrants close attention by the Department. See *Arlington Heights*, 429 U.S. at 266 (intent may be established by "clear pattern, unexplainable on grounds other than race"). (Exhibit 1, p. 50)

8 The Exhibits to the amended complaint concerning the US DOJ's findings of
9 unconstitutional practices by the Sheriff's Department in Antelope Valley, as well as
10 the oversight monitor's report showing that the racial profiling and discriminatory
11 traffic stops in the Antelope Valley persist, are directly relevant to Plaintiff's
12 allegations, because those Exhibits show a pattern and practice of the exact same
13 constitutional violations alleged by Plaintiff in this action and these Exhibits support
14 Plaintiff's *Monell* claim against COLA.

15 **V. IN THE EVENT THAT THE COURT IS INCLINED TO GRANT ANY**
16 **PART OF THE DEFENDANTS' MOTION, PLAINTIFF REQUESTS AN**
17 **OPPORTUNITY TO AMEND**

18 As a general rule, leave to amend a complaint which has been dismissed should
19 be freely granted. FRCP 15(a) expressly states the court "should freely give leave
20 when justice so requires." [FRCP 15(a)(2); *United States v. Corinthian Colleges*, 655
21 F3d 984, 995 (9th Cir. 2011)—standard for granting leave to amend is
22 "generous"; *Independent Trust Corp. v. Stewart Information Services Corp.*, 665 F3d
23 930, 943 (7th Cir. 2012)]. Federal policy strongly favors determination of cases on
24 their merits. Therefore, the role of pleadings is limited, and leave to amend the
25 pleadings is freely given unless the opposing party makes a showing of undue
26 prejudice, or bad faith or dilatory motive on the part of the moving party. [*Foman v.*
27 *Davis*, 371 US 178, 182, 83 S.Ct. 227, 230 (1962); *Sonoma County Ass'n of Retired*
28 *Employees v. Sonoma County*, 708 F3d 1109, 1117 (9th Cir. 2013)] The liberal

1 standard for permitting amendment “is especially important where the law is
2 uncertain.” [*Runnion ex rel. Runnion v. Girl Scouts of Greater Chicago & Northwest*
3 *Indiana*, 786 F3d 510, 520, 523 (7th Cir. 2015)—liberal amendment standard needed
4 “in the face of uncertain pleading standards after *Twombly* and *Iqbal*”] Thus, while
5 “leave to amend should not be granted automatically,” the circumstances under
6 which Rule 15(a) “permits denial of leave to amend are limited.” [*Ynclan v.*
7 *Department of Air Force*, 943 F2d 1388, 1391 (5th Cir. 1991)]

8 Plaintiff contends that any perceived deficiencies can be cured by amendment.

9 **VI. CONCLUSION**

10 For the reasons set forth above, the motion to dismiss should be denied and the
11 Defendants ordered to answer the Complaint.

12
13 DATED: January 9, 2023

The Law Office Of Thomas M. Ferlauto, APC

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16 By: 
17 Thomas M. Ferlauto
18 Attorney For: Plaintiff, JASHUA ASSIFF
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